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UNCLAS HARARE 000958

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/PDPA FOR DALTON, MITCHELL AND SIMS
NSC FOR JENDAYI FOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR GURNEY
PARIS FOR NEARY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT PAPER REACTS TO MELDRUM EXPULSION

11. Under headline "Iron fist will fail" the independent daily "The Daily News" dedicated its May 19 editorial to the expulsion of Andrew Meldrum, a United States national and correspondent for the British newspaper "The Guardian." The editorial said Meldrum's ejection was "ill-advised and unlawful" and that "the government's crude actions will not silence Meldrum or other journalists." Excerpts follow:
12. "The government of Zimbabwe has yet again contrived to make an international spectacle of itself with its ill-advised and unlawful deportation of Guardian journalist Andrew Meldrum. . . . It is tragic for the nation that the government fails to realize, or simply does not care, that its iron-fisted response to its citizen's attempts to express basic rights that they are guaranteed by the Constitution is fuelling the tension it prefers, ostrich-like, not to see. . . . Through its deportation of Meldrum, President Robert Mugabe's regime has merely added to the list of journalists who are determined to tell the true story of Zimbabwe, even if they have to do it from beyond the country's borders. The government's crude actions will not silence Meldrum or other journalists. . . ."

WHITEHEAD